

ATOMITE, the glass-like substance formed by the terrible heat of the explosion of the atomic bomb in New Mexico in July, has been made into jewelry. Merle Oberon, the movie star, was the first to wear it. Though at first this might seem to show a frivolous attitude toward a very serious subject, the purpose behind it was a good one. Miss Oberon wore jewelry made of the material to refute claims made by the Japanese that atomite is radioactive long after an explosion of an atomic bomb.

The whole surface of the crater formed by the explosion of the test bomb was covered with the new substance, which resulted from the instantaneous crystallization of grains of sand under the intense heat generated by the explosion. Its color varies from pale green to jade, and the first visitors to the scene of the bomb-blast were awed by its eerie appearance.

The hair ornament shown in the top picture was designed in the shape of an atom by Mark Roven for Merle Oberon. The settings are



Bomb-Site JEWELRY



Photo by George Lippman

made of palladium. Though the jewelry has been displayed publicly, and though the Army has officially announced that atomite is harmless, it has not been released for commercial use. Considering the origin of the substance, it is very unlikely that it will ever become popular for decorative purposes but will enjoy a brief popularity as a passing novelty.

The atomic dust of the explosion, which took place at Alamogordo, New Mexico, was not confined to this vicinity but was carried over many states by the wind.

(Top) Merle Oberon wears atomite hair pin and earrings. (Left) Atomite in the rough and finished.